

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 AID-05
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

USINT HAVANA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: MPOL, AO, NI, US

SUBJECT:EXCERPTS OF PRESIDENT'S MAY 26 PRESS CONFERENCE

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1. WE ASSUME THAT POSTS HAVE RECEIVED TRANSCRIPT OF
PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON MAY 26, WHICH INTER ALIA,
ADDRESSED CONCERNS EXPRESSED IN REFTEL. THERE FOLLOW
RELEVANT PASSAGES:

2. IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT, THE PRESIDENT SAID QUOTE AS

FOR THE CLARK AMENDMENT, WHICH PROHIBITS ACTION IN REGARD TO ANGOLA, I HAVE NO PRESENT INTENTION OF SEEKING ITS MODIFICATION NOR THAT OF ANY OTHER SPECIAL PIECE OF LEGISLATION. ANY PROPOSAL FOR MODIFICATION WILL AWAIT OUR VIEW OF ALL RESTRICTIONS AND CONSULTATIONS WITH THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS. UNQUOTE.

3. QUESTION: CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC IN THE KINDS OF CHANGES YOU WOULD SEEK IN THIS REVIEW (OF POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA)? FOR INSTANCE, HOW DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR HANDS ARE TIED IN SENDING AID TO THESE NATIONS IN AFRICA? AND FURTHER, UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS WOULD YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO EXTEND AID, LETHAL OR NONLETHAL, TO SUCH TROOPS AS THE OPPOSITION FORCES IN ANGOLA?

ANSWER: WELL, YOU KNOW I HAVE NO INTENTION OF GETTING INVOLVED IN ANY CONFLICT IN ANGOLA. THIS IS NOT MY INTENTION AT ALL. BUT THE CONGRESS HAS HAD AN INCREASING INCLINATION RECENTLY, BEGINNING LONG BEFORE I CAME IN OFFICE, TO IMPOSE ONE-HOUSE VETOES AND TO PUT VERY TIGHT CONSTRAINTS ON WHAT COUNTRIES WE COULD GIVE ANY AID TO AND PROHIBIT EVEN WORLD BANK LOANS FOR COUNTRIES, SAY, THAT PRODUCED COMPETITIVE CROPS IN THE UNITED STATES (SIC). . . THAT MEANS THAT WE ARE PROHIBITED FROM GIVING MUCH NEEDED FRIENDSHIP, MUTUAL SUPPORT, BUILDING UP A TRADE RELATIONSHIP, GIVING AID WHEN IT'S NECESSARY

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TO COUNTRIES THAT MIGHT DISPERATELY DESIRE OUR HELP BUT BE FORCED, BECAUSE OF AN ABSENCE OF IT, TO TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION OR TO TURN TO EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES TO HELP THEM SUSTAIN THEMSELVES.

4. QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, I SUPPOSE MOST OF THESE RESTRICTIONS THAT WERE WRITTEN INTO THE LAW WERE WRITTEN WITH THE IDEA OF KEEPING THE UNITED STATES FROM BECOMING BOGGED DOWN IN ANOTHER VIETNAM, BUT I JUST WONDER, SIR, DO YOU SEE A COMPARISON IN THE CHOICES YOU NOW FACE AND THE CHOICES THAT WERE FACED BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND PRESIDENT JOHNSON BACK IN THOSE EARLY DAYS WHEN WE BEGAN TO PUT -- GET IN -- JUST A LITTLE WAYS AND THEN MORE AND MORE CAME ON. WHAT DIFFERENCES ARE THERE IN THIS SITUATION AND WHAT THEY FACED?

ANSWER: NO, I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY COMPARISON AT ALL. IN MY OPINION, IF PRESIDENT JOHNSON, PRESIDENT NIXON, PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, KENNEDY WERE IN OFFICE NOW, HAVING EXPERIENCED THE VIETNAM WAR, THEY WOULD BE VERY CAUTIOUS AND VERY CAREFUL NOT TO BECOME INVOLVED AGAIN MILITARILY. AND I HAVE THAT DEEP FEELING MYSELF. WE ARE TALKING HERE

ABOUT THE KINDS OF AMENDMENTS THAT I DESCRIBED TO WES CLIFFORD A FEW MINUTES AGO, AN AMENDMENT THAT SAYS WE CANNOT EITHER GIVE ANY AID OR EVEN VOTE IN THE WORLD BANK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A LOAN TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY JUST BECAUSE THEIR FORM OF GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE DIFFERENT FROM OURS, OR BECAUSE THEY HAVE HAD SOME PAST -- OR EVEN PRESENT -- HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, OR EVEN BECAUSE THEY PRODUCE COMPETITIVE CROPS THAT MIGHT BE COMPETING WITH CROPS GROWN IN THE UNITED STATES. AND THERE'S A TREND IN CONGRESS THAT IS BUILDING UP THAT PUTS TOO MUCH CONSTRAINT ON A PRESIDENT TO DEAL WITH RAPIDLY CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES. WE DO NOT WANT TO SEND OUR MILITARY FORCES INTO AFRICA TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INTRUSION. THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS ARE EAGER TO GIVE

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EITHER MILITARY AID, AND EVEN THE SOVIETS SEND CUBAN TROOPS INTO A COUNTRY TO FIGHT. WE DON'T WANT TO DO

THAT AT ALL. BUT IF WE CAN'T EVEN GIVE A SHIPMENT OF WHEAT, OR GIVE A SOUND COMMERCIAL LOAN OR VOTE FOR A LOAN BY THE WORLD BANK TO THAT SAME PEOPLE -- OR THAT SAME COUNTRY -- IT MEANS THAT I CAN'T COMPETE AT ALL, EVEN PEACEFULLY, WITH THE SOVIET OR CUBAN MILITARY ACTION IN THOSE COUNTRIES. THAT'S WHAT CONCERNS ME VERY DEEPLY.

CHRISTOPHER

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